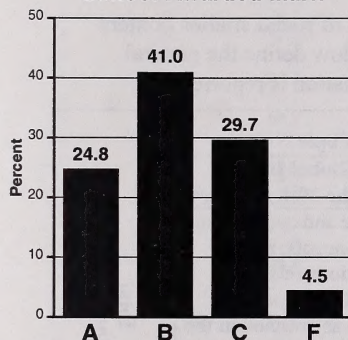


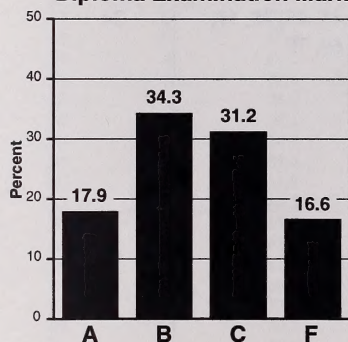
Social Studies 30

Diploma Examination Results Examiners' Report for June 1999

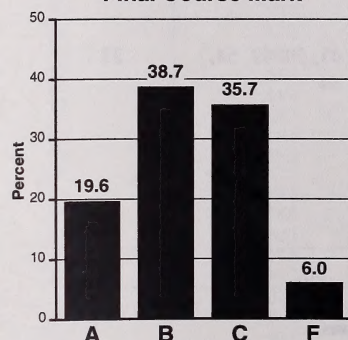
School-Awarded Mark



Diploma Examination Mark



Final Course Mark



The summary information in this report provides teachers, school administrators, and students with an overview of results from the June 1999 administration of the Social Studies 30 Diploma Examination. This information is most helpful when used in conjunction with the detailed school and jurisdiction reports that are provided electronically to schools and school jurisdiction offices. A provincial report containing a detailed analysis of the combined January, April, June, and August results is made available annually.

Description of the Examination

The Social Studies 30 Diploma Examination consists of two parts: a multiple-choice section worth 70% and a written-response section worth 30% of the total examination mark.

Achievement of Standards

The information reported is based on the final course marks achieved by 10 298 students who wrote the June 1999 examination and received a school-awarded mark.

- 94.0% of the 10 298 students achieved the *acceptable standard* (a final course mark of 50% or higher).
- 19.6% of the 10 298 students achieved the *standard of excellence* (a final course mark of 80% or higher).

Of the students who wrote the June 1999 examination, 53.4% were female and 46.6% were male.

- 92.7% of the female students and 95.5% of the male students achieved the *acceptable standard*.
- 17.5% of the female students and 22.0% of the male students achieved the *standard of excellence*.

Provincial Averages

- The average school-awarded mark was 69.5%.
- The average diploma examination mark was 64.9%.
- The average final course mark, representing an equal weighting of the school-awarded mark and the diploma examination mark, was 67.5%.

Part A: Multiple Choice

Examination Blueprint

Part A: Multiple Choice has a value of 70 marks, one mark for each multiple-choice question. Each question is classified in two ways: by the curricular content area (topic) being tested and by the knowledge and skill objectives required to answer the question. The examination blueprint illustrates the distribution of questions in June 1999 according to these classifications.

All questions on the diploma examination require students to demonstrate knowledge of social studies content and to apply social studies skills to that knowledge base. The reporting categories below define the general types of questions that appear on the examination and the categories for which information is reported.

		Question Classification by Topic		Total Questions
		Topic A: Political and Economic Systems	Topic B: Global Interaction in the 20th Century	
		Knowledge and application of facts, concepts, and generalizations related to the world's political and economic systems as outlined in the <i>Program of Studies</i> .	Knowledge and application of facts, concepts, and generalizations related to the interaction of nations since 1918 as outlined in the <i>Program of Studies</i> .	
Question Classification by Knowledge and Skill Objectives	Comprehension of Information and Ideas These questions require students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of generalizations, key concepts, and facts related to social studies content.	1, 2, 3, 13, 16, 17, 23, 24, 25, 28, 31, 32	42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 48, 51, 59, 65, 68, 69, 70	24
	Interpretation and Analysis of Information and Ideas These questions require students to demonstrate their knowledge of social studies content by interpreting and analyzing information and ideas.	4, 7, 9, 14, 19, 20, 22, 26, 27, 29, 34	36, 37, 40, 49, 53, 56, 58, 60, 62, 63, 66, 67	23
	Synthesis and Evaluation of Information and Ideas These questions require students to demonstrate and apply their knowledge of social studies content by synthesizing information and ideas, and evaluating their accuracy and worth.	5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 15, 18, 21, 30, 33, 35	38, 39, 41, 47, 50, 52, 54, 55, 57, 61, 64	23
	Total Questions	35	35	70

Subtest Results*

Results are reported in average raw scores.

Total Part A: 47.1 out of 70

by Topic

- Political and Economic Systems: 23.7 out of 35
- Global Interaction in the 20th Century: 23.4 out of 35

by Knowledge and Skill Objectives

- Comprehension of Information and Ideas: 16.0 out of 24
- Interpretation and Analysis of Information and Ideas: 15.5 out of 23
- Synthesis and Evaluation of Information and Ideas: 15.6 out of 23

*Readers are cautioned **not** to compare subtest results because the subtests are not of equal difficulty. Instead, readers should compare these provincial subtest results with their own school results.

Question-by-Question Results

Question	Key	Difficulty*
1	D	66.8
2	C	68.6
3	A	75.8
4	C	61.8
5	A	47.4
6	B	73.7
7	A	64.6
8	C	79.5
9	C	62.8
10	A	78.8
11	D	83.7
12	A	40.1
13	D	60.3
14	B	79.0
15	D	85.1
16	C	56.8
17	D	66.1
18	B	83.9
19	C	62.5
20	C	84.1
21	D	63.9
22	A	72.2
23	D	58.3
24	D	83.2
25	C	55.4
26	B	64.1
27	B	55.8
28	D	87.2
29	C	80.1
30	A	64.2
31	A	77.0
32	D	76.8
33	A	35.1
34	D	54.0
35	A	64.4
36	B	64.8
37	A	83.2
38	B	65.5
39	A	53.9
40	D	67.7
41	D	69.4
42	B	72.2
43	D	70.2
44	B	48.7
45	B	66.4
46	C	71.5
47	C	73.4
48	B	57.3
49	B	29.9
50	A	84.3
51	C	61.4
52	B	65.5
53	A	79.6
54	B	59.2
55	D	82.5
56	A	63.8
57	B	78.2
58	C	80.1
59	B	48.8
60	A	73.2
61	C	67.8
62	C	71.9
63	B	60.5
64	C	61.5
65	C	62.8
66	D	80.9
67	A	52.6
68	D	66.9
69	C	72.5
70	D	73.0

*Difficulty—percentage of students answering the question correctly

The table at the left shows question-by-question results and the keyed answers. Parallel tables in the school and jurisdiction reports show the percentage of students who selected each alternative. By comparing school and jurisdiction results with the provincial results presented here, teachers can determine areas of strength and weakness in the achievement of their students and, consequently, areas of potential strength and weakness in their programs.

Examiners' Comments

The multiple-choice section of the examination requires students to go beyond simply recalling information to apply their knowledge and thinking skills. Students must demonstrate that they understand social studies concepts; that they comprehend historical, political, and economic relationships; and that they can interpret and evaluate social studies information and ideas.

During the marking session, markers were surveyed as to whether the standards embedded in the multiple-choice questions were appropriate and fair. Teachers generally concurred that this section of the examination set an appropriately demanding standard of achievement for graduating Social Studies 30 students. They found the data sources relevant and engaging and the questions challenging but fair.

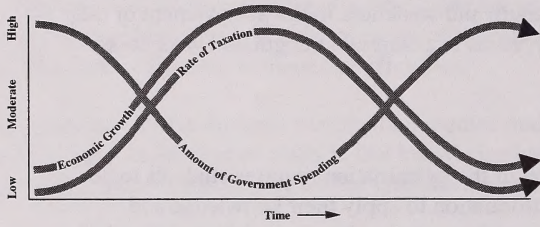
The following table gives results for six questions selected from the examination and shows the percentage of students, in five groups, who answered each question correctly. The comments on pages 4 and 5 address some of the decisions that students may have made and some of the skills they may have used to answer these questions correctly.

Percentage of Students Correctly Answering Selected Multiple-Choice Questions

Student Group	Question Number					
	14	15	26	49	50	62
All students	79.0	85.1	64.1	29.9	84.3	71.9
Students achieving the <i>standard of excellence</i> (80% or higher, or A) on the whole examination	95.6	97.8	93.0	47.6	98.6	96.6
Students achieving the <i>acceptable standard</i> who received marks between 65% and 79%, or B, on the whole examination	88.0	92.3	74.7	29.8	93.2	84.3
Students achieving the <i>acceptable standard</i> who received marks between 50% and 64%, or C, on the whole examination	75.0	82.2	51.9	24.2	81.1	62.2
Students who have not achieved the acceptable standard (49% or less) on the whole examination	49.7	62.1	34.2	21.4	56.6	37.5

Use the following graph to answer questions 14 and 15.

Theoretical Relationships Among Economic Growth, Taxation, and Government Spending



14. Assuming that the theoretical relationships in the graph are correct, government spending during times of increased economic growth should be low because
- A. demands for public services are high
 - * B. recessionary pressures are much less
 - C. taxation revenues are difficult to raise
 - D. unemployment rates are increasing
15. According to the theory underlying the graph, why should the rate of taxation be high during a period of high economic growth?
- A. Because such a policy encourages greater consumer spending
 - B. Because increased taxation levels help to stop rising unemployment
 - C. Because increased government spending requires increased taxation levels
 - * D. Because such a policy allows government to set aside revenues for future economic downturns

Questions 14 and 15 comprised a set of two questions based on a graph indicating a series of theoretical relationships among three economic factors. The trends shown in the graph are usually associated with the policies delineated by the economist John Maynard Keynes.

To answer question 14 correctly, students had to demonstrate an understanding of a causal factor that would explain a central tendency, namely, that government spending becomes less necessary during a period of prosperity. Similarly, question 15 required students to demonstrate an understanding of the reason that underlies and explains the directional trend between economic growth and taxation rate represented in the graph.

Neither question was difficult: 79.0% of all students and 95.6% of those who achieved the *standard of excellence* answered question 14 correctly, and an impressive 85.1% of all students (97.8% of those who achieved the *standard of excellence*) answered question 15 correctly.

The achievement results for these questions (and similar ones throughout the examination) are a credit to the critical thinking skills and grasp of knowledge demonstrated by many Grade 12 social studies students in their approach to data presenting sophisticated information and ideas.

Use the following events to answer question 26.

Some Political Events In Germany, 1919–33

- I. The National Socialist German Workers' Party was organized.
- II. The Weimar Republic was established with a democratic constitution.
- III. Adolf Hitler was appointed chancellor by President Hindenburg.
- IV. Adolf Hitler attempted a coup d'état in the so-called Beer-Hall *Putsch*.

26. In what order did these events occur?
- A. Events III, IV, II, I
 - * B. Events II, I, IV, III
 - C. Events IV, I, III, II
 - D. Events I, II, III, IV

Question 26, one of a set of two questions, required students to determine the correct order of occurrence for a number of specific historical events associated with Weimar Germany and the rise of Adolf Hitler. Many students did not find this question difficult: 64.1% of all students and 93.0% of students achieving the *standard of excellence* answered the question correctly. This result is particularly encouraging in that many students have, over the years, demonstrated considerable difficulty with questions requiring analysis or categorization of data by chronology.

Use the following excerpt to answer questions 49 and 50.

Treaty Document Excerpt

- Article 1** Japan recognizes and respects the leadership of Germany and Italy in the establishment of a new order in Europe.
- Article 2** Germany and Italy recognize and respect the leadership of Japan in the establishment of a new order in Greater East Asia.
- Article 3** Germany, Italy, and Japan agree to cooperate in their efforts on the aforesaid lines. They further undertake to assist one another with all political, economic, and military means if one of the three Contracting Powers is attacked by a Power at present not involved in the European War or in the Chinese–Japanese conflict.

—from *Landmarks of the Western Heritage*

49. Which of the following foreign policies is **most inconsistent** with the terms of the above treaty?
- A. Creation of an alliance system
 - * B. Support for collective security
 - C. Pursuit of territorial expansion
 - D. Establishment of spheres of influence
50. The governments of the nations named in the excerpt are **best** described as
- * A. fascist and militaristic
 - B. socialist and aggressive
 - C. capitalist and isolationist
 - D. communist and expansionist

62. Which action is **inconsistent** with the foreign policy goal with which it is paired?

ACTION	FOREIGN POLICY GOAL
A. The American Senate refuses to ratify the Treaty of Versailles.	Isolationism
B. Many Western European nations join NATO.	Containment
* C. Warsaw Pact members send troops into Czechoslovakia	Détente
D. The American government funds SDI (Star Wars) research.	Deterrence

Questions 49 and 50 comprised a set of questions based on an excerpt outlining several articles of the Tripartite Pact, signed by the Axis powers in September of 1940, with the primary purpose of deterring the United States from entering the Second World War.

Question 49 required students to interpret the source material in order to discern a foreign policy direction that was **not** consistent with those revealed or inferred from the three articles given. Students found the question very difficult, with only 29.9% of all students responding correctly.

Interestingly, however, 84.3% of all students (98.6% of those who achieved the *standard of excellence*) answered question 50 correctly, seemingly able to relate the historical context of aggressive militarism underlying the terms cited in the articles. This being so, why would 35.4% of all students, for example, select alternative C, “pursuit of territorial expansion” as a correct response to question 49? It is possible that students raced through the stem of question 49 and misread “inconsistent” as “consistent.”

These questions reinforce the importance of focussed and careful reading of examination questions and sources.

Question 62 required students to demonstrate an understanding of relationships between various foreign policy goals and actions and to identify them as being either consistent or inconsistent. Here, the term “inconsistent” did not prove to be problematic. Students did not find the question difficult: 71.9% of all students answered the question correctly. As well, 96.6% of students achieving the *standard of excellence* chose the correct response. Students again demonstrated their competence in dealing with a complex task in type and level of thinking skills by sorting out and judging connections among a number of key historical events and social studies concepts.

Part B: Written Response

The results for the written-response section of the Social Studies 30 Diploma Examination are tabulated according to the percentage of students achieving each score (1 to 5) in the four scoring categories. Each scoring category assesses different but interrelated skills and knowledge; consequently, individual students' scores are likely to vary from one category to another. Those students who achieve at or above the *standard of excellence* (80%) on the written-response section usually have scores of **4 Proficient** or **5 Excellent** for all scoring categories. Students meeting the *acceptable standard* (50%) on the written-response section tend to have scores of **3 Satisfactory** or greater for most scoring categories but may produce **2 Limited** work for one or two categories.

Readers will find the results most meaningful in the context of the assignment and the scoring descriptors. The most useful starting place for reviewing these results is at the **3 Satisfactory** level. The scoring guides that describe scoring criteria are in the 1998–99 *Social Studies 30 Information Bulletin* located on our web site at <http://ednet.edc.gov.ab.ca/studenteval/>.

The written-response section contributes 30% of the total examination mark. Students are required to write one complete and unified essay in which they discuss the importance and complexity of an issue and rationally defend their position by using supportive, relevant evidence. The organization of arguments should show evidence of logical thought that should persuade the reader of the student's position. Students are expected to make use of their critical and creative thinking skills to demonstrate complex and independent thought.

Part B: Written Response has a total value of 30 marks: 10 marks each for *Defence of Position* and *Quality of Examples*, and five marks each for *Exploration of the Issue* and *Quality of Language and Expression*. The average raw score mean for Part B was 17.7 out of 30. By comparing school and jurisdiction results with the provincial results presented here, teachers can determine areas of strength and weakness in the achievement of their students and, consequently, areas of potential strength and weakness in their programs.

Examination Blueprint and Percentage Distribution of Scores

Scoring Category	Proportion of Total Mark (%)	Percentage Distribution of Scores									
		Excellent		Proficient		Satisfactory		Limited		Poor	Ins*
		5	4.5	4	3.5	3	2.5	2	1.5	1	
Exploration of the Issue	5	2.5	3.8	11.4	14.2	25.5	20.9	15.3	4.4	1.7	0.2
Defence of Position	10	2.5	3.9	10.8	14.5	26.5	20.5	15.5	4.1	1.3	0.2
Quality of Examples	10	2.4	3.3	8.9	11.5	21.7	19.7	20.1	7.9	4.3	0.2
Quality of Language and Expression	5	3.6	5.4	14.9	18.0	39.0	12.5	5.1	1.0	0.3	0.2

* **Ins** (Insufficient) is a special category that includes students who did not attempt the assignment, who wrote too little to evaluate, or who wrote answers that were completely off topic.

Note: The shaded portion represents the percentage of students who achieved or exceeded the *acceptable standard*. Students with scores of 4, 4.5, and/or 5 have achieved the *standard of excellence*.

Topic A

Some people believe that governments should implement policies that promote full employment during times of economic instability. Others believe that during times of economic instability, market forces should be relied upon to restore employment and prosperity.

To what extent should governments intervene in an economy to encourage full employment?

In your essay, take and defend a position on this issue.

Topic B

Some people believe that all nations should support the establishment of a world government to encourage greater global cooperation and peace. Others believe that, despite the problems the world faces, a nation's sovereignty should not be subjected to the restrictions of a world government.

Should nations support a movement toward the establishment of a world government?

In your essay, take and defend a position on this issue.

Examiners' Comments

The results of the written-response component for the June 1999 examination revealed an encouraging average score (17.7/30) in line with those scores achieved provincially over the last four years. This result reflects a continuing confidence on the part of many students to apply and convey their knowledge of social studies in the form of a position paper.

Many teacher-markers commented on a number of positive aspects regarding student responses on either topic. Most noteworthy was the array of examples, both contemporary and historical, used as evidence to support a position. Students often used appropriately supportive ideas and details from the multiple-choice section of the examination. Many students wrote long, focused, thoughtful, and creative papers that demonstrated their understanding of complexities surrounding the issue. This was especially true for Topic B Papers.

A number of stumbling blocks, however, continue to erode the best intentions of some students. Quite noticeable with Topic A was the tendency of far too many students to forego dealing with the assignment topic, either by happenstance or by design, and to expound at length, as one maker quipped, about "my favourite

economy." Such papers, comprised of extraneous and irrelevant detail, received lower marks. It cannot be stressed enough that students are well advised to consider carefully not only the requirements of the stated issue but also the implications and directions found in the preamble to each topic **before** getting under way.

This concern aside, many students did argue capably for varying degrees of government intervention to enhance or preserve employment. In developing these approaches, students often successfully applied references to centrally planned, market, and mixed economies. As a caution, many markers noted some garbled thinking regarding the concepts of supply side, demand side, and Keynesian economics (The New Deal, in particular). Further instructional elaboration and review may remedy this concern.

In dealing with Topic B, markers observed an interesting tendency on the part of some students to dismiss the idea of world government out of hand as totally unworkable, or to comment that if world government were achievable, such a development would inevitably be totalitarian in nature. As a result, critical thought and analysis was replaced by an uneasiness with the topic and with difficulty in applying specific examples. As one marker pointed out, such papers became "wordy without much content." Along this line of concern, markers felt that many students spent too much time and energy writing about *how* a world government would operate—for example, would proportional representation, as found in Sweden, be used—rather than dealing with whether the establishment of world government was a viable option.

Many students, however, did delve appropriately into the concepts of sovereignty and international organizations and their relevance to global stability. With such papers, current events examples often abounded with references to the successes and failures of the United Nations and to various regional organizations, which was not surprising given the back drop of the Kosovo incursion at the time of writing. It was also encouraging to see numbers of students grounding their thoughts in the insightful perception that the evolution of forms of international cooperation that we witness today is providing fresh approaches to containing conflict and bloodshed even if the establishment of a world government is too idealistic.

Students achieving the *acceptable standard* were able to express an adequate understanding of the complexity and significance of an issue. These writers often recognized the principles underlying different viewpoints associated with an issue and generally established a historical or contemporary frame of reference for an issue's importance. Students achieving the *standard of excellence* perceptively investigated the complexity and significance of the issue, often throughout the fabric of their response. Such students were comfortable revealing to the reader what they genuinely thought, rather than attempting to write what they felt the reader wanted to hear.

As in previous administrations, many students demonstrated an awareness that a stronger position paper is developed by establishing a basis for each argument or reason and then applying specific historical and contemporary examples as supportive evidence for each argument. Students achieving the *acceptable standard* supported their position with several adequate arguments. Although these arguments lacked elaboration and depth of understanding, they were connected to the issue under discussion and to the position taken. Supportive evidence used by these writers to bolster an argument was generally relevant but not error-free, and more often general rather than specific in presentation. Such writers, despite making minor errors, demonstrated control of the conventions of language.

Students achieving below the *acceptable standard* did not link their examples in a meaningful way to their positions and often exhibited vagueness and confusion with key social studies concepts. They developed evidence primarily in descriptive terms, unloading as much data as they could recall, thereby exhibiting little sense of its organization and applicability. Superficial descriptions of detail and the presentation of extraneous information resulted in lower scores. Students achieving below the acceptable standard demonstrated poor control of conventions.

Students achieving the standard of excellence composed powerful and forceful arguments that were firmly rooted in the application of germane, well-chosen evidence—evidence that in many instances supported a qualified position. Students at this level wrote carefully organized essays that were essentially free from errors in mechanics and grammar.

Generally, teachers were very satisfied with the curricular fit of the two written-response questions. Based on a review of the essays submitted for the June 1999 writing of the Social Studies 30 Examination, Alberta's students have learned a great deal and their marks reflect this continued achievement.

Comparison of Students' Results on Parts A and B

	Part A	Part B
A	28.0%	12.6%
B	29.7%	19.7%
C	25.9%	42.6%
F	16.4%	25.1%

While it is not intended that parts A and B of the examination be considered as separate examinations or that each part necessarily tests the same curricular objectives, it is interesting to see the distribution of student results.

In June 1999, considerably more students were awarded scores in the "A" category on Part A of the examination than on Part B, and considerably more students were awarded scores in the "F" category on Part B of the examination than on Part A. These scores do not signal a new phenomenon, but are consistent with results of recent administrations.

For further information, contact Barry Jonas bjonas@edc.gov.ab.ca or Elana Scraba escraba@edc.gov.ab.ca at the Student Evaluation Branch at 427-0010. To call toll-free from outside of Edmonton, dial 310-0000.

Examples of Students' Writing from the January 1999 administration of Social Studies 30 are posted on the Alberta Learning extranet site. The examples and the accompanying rationales illustrate the standards for written response.

You can access the extranet by using your school's access number. Every principal has this information. Should you experience any difficulty with access or with finding material on the extranet, please call the Help Desk at (780)427-1111.

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